

**Procurement of rough diamonds from Congo and Russia**

**4140. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI:** Will the Minister for COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a delagation each was to visit Democratic Republic of Congo and Russia in the tender proceedings and for making bids for direct procurement of rough diamonds;

(b) if so, dates of visit by the delegation; and

(c) whether the delegation was able to procure directly rough diamonds from the said countries?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH):** (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A delegation comprising representatives of Department of Commerce, MMTC and Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) visited Russia from 13th to 18th December, 2000. Another delegation of representatives of GJEPC visited Societe Minere de Bakwanga (MIBA) in the Democratic Republic of Congo, from 7th to 13th December, 2000 to explore the possibility of direct procurement of rough diamonds from them.

(c) So far as Russia is concerned during the visit of the delegation, a contract for the supply of rough diamonds valued at US \$ 4.46 million was signed. However, the sale of the rough diamonds is yet to be materialised. As regards supply from MIBA of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Indian delegation took part in the tenders, but did not succeed in direct supply of rough diamonds.

**Import of Plywood**

**†4141. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that plywood is being imported in the country on a large scale and thus the domestic plywood industry has come into grip of crisis;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.